

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4605

February 8, 2021

The Honorable Ralph S. Northam
Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Governor Ralph Northam,

On behalf of all our constituents, we urge you to consider loosening the current COVID-19 economic restrictions that have been imposed since March 2020. We also ask that you provide the public a clear regulatory forecast, on a state-wide basis, to help job creators plan for the remainder of this year.

Businesses of all sizes have been impacted by the extensive slate of COVID-19 restrictions implemented throughout 2020, with small business bearing the brunt of the economic pain. For example, current regulations restrict business hours or penalize outdoor venues even if they comply with social distancing. Not only are these regulations inconsistently applied, but it seems to have little demonstrable impact on preserving public health.

Congress has spent trillions in economic stimulus and healthcare costs while the Federal Reserve has printed money to attempt to finance this historic level of federal spending. Despite these efforts, more businesses close every week across the Commonwealth.

Now just a few weeks into 2021, there are signs of a growing bipartisan consensus to rethink the posture of stay-at-home orders and arbitrary lockdowns. On January 11, 2021, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo tweeted, "We simply cannot stay closed until the vaccine hits critical mass. The cost is too high. We will have nothing left to open. We must reopen the economy, but we must do it smartly and safely."¹ We agree with Governor Cuomo that our current course is untenable. There is no better government aid that Congress or the Commonwealth can provide than allowing people to make responsible choices to get back to work.

We understand that balancing the interests of the economy and public health is a very difficult challenge. Regardless of the regulatory decisions you make to address this challenge, a clear regulatory forecast would give our businesses clear expectations for the remainder of 2021. Business leaders deserve to hear from you with your best estimates on the duration and severity of

¹ Cuomo, A.M. [@NYGovCuomo] 2021, (January 11) "We simply cannot stay closed until the vaccine hits critical mass. The cost is too high. We will have nothing left to open. We must reopen the economy, but we must do it smartly and safely. #SOTS2021" [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/nygovcuomo/status/1348673192609591296>

restrictions so that they can properly allocate capital in response to policy decisions that are outside their control.

We appreciate your service during this difficult time and your consideration of these requests. We look forward to working with you on behalf of the constituents of the great Commonwealth of Virginia.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Bob Good in blue ink.

Congressman Bob Good (VA-05)

Handwritten signature of Robert J. Wittman in blue ink.

Congressman Robert J. Wittman (VA-01)

Handwritten signature of H. Morgan Griffith in blue ink.

Congressman H. Morgan Griffith (VA-09)

Handwritten signature of Ben Cline in blue ink.

Congressman Ben Cline (VA-06)